UN

UNITED NATIONS

E

Economic and Social Council

Distr.
GENERAL

E/CN.17/IPF/1996/26
21 August 1996

Original: ENGLISH

COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Panel on Forests
Third session
Geneva, 9-20 September 1996
Item 2 of the provisional agenda*

IMPLEMENTATION OF FOREST-RELATED DECISIONS OF THE UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT AT THE NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL LEVELS, INCLUDING AN EXAMINATION OF SECTORAL AND CROSS-SECTORAL LINKAGES

Letter dated 15 August 1996 from the Permanent Representative of Peru to the United Nations and the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Observer Mission of Switzerland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

The Permanent Mission of Peru to the United Nations and the Permanent Observer Mission of Switzerland to the United Nations have the honour to transmit to you the final report of the Independent Group of Experts** under element V.1 of the programme of work of the Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Panel on Forests of the Commission on Sustainable Development.

The establishment of the Independent Group of Experts was the result of a joint proposal by the Governments of Switzerland and Peru during the first session of the Panel, which took place in New York from 11 to 15 September 1995. Its task was to elaborate a study on the work carried out by international organizations and multilateral institutions and under existing instruments related to forest issues with a view to identifying any gaps, areas requiring enhancement, as well as any areas of duplication. The

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* E/CN.17/IPF/1996/13.

** The report is circulated in the language of submission only.

Group, in which countries from all five regional groups of the United Nations as well as several non-governmental organizations were represented, has held two meetings in Geneva (5-7 March 1996 and 24-28 June 1996). Its report should make an important contribution to the third session of the Panel, scheduled to be held from 9 to 20 September 1996 in Geneva.

In preparation of this session we would be grateful if you could make arrangements to circulate the attached report as an official document of the Panel and consequently distribute it to all Permanent Missions accredited to the United Nations in New York as well as to other participants in the session.

(signed): Fernando GUILLÉN
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of
Peru to the United Nations

(signed): Peter MAURER
Chargé d'Affaires a.i.
Permanent Observer Mission
of Switzerland to the
United Nations

SWISS-PERUVIAN INITIATIVE ON FORESTS

REPORT

OF THE

INDEPENDENT EXPERT GROUP

Overview on International Organizations, Institutions and Instruments Related to Forests

Geneva, Switzerland
July 1996

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LIST of ACRONYMS

ACT	Amazon Cooperation Treaty
AfDB	African Development Bank
AsDB	Asian Development Bank
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
CIFOR	Centre for International Forestry Research
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna
COFO	FAO's Committee on Forestry
CSD	Commission on Sustainable Development
ECE	See UNECE.
EFI	European Forestry Institute
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GTOS	Global Terrestrial Observing System
IADB	Interamerican Development Bank
ICRAF	International Centre for Research in Agroforestry
ILO	International Labour Organization
IPCC	International Panel on Climate Change
IPF	Intergovernmental Panel on Forests
ITTA	International Tropical Timber Agreement
ITTO	International Tropical Timber Organization
IUCN	The World Conservation Union
IUFRO	International Union of Forestry Research Organizations
MAB	Man and Biosphere Programme (UNESCO)
OAS/OEA	Organization of American States
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
SPIF	Swiss-Peruvian Initiative on Forests
UNCED	United Nations Conference on Environment and Development
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization
UNITAR	United Nations Institute for Training and Research
UNRISD	United Nations Research Institute for Social Development
WB	The World Bank
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization
WMO	World Meteorological Organization
WRI	World Resources Institute
WTO	World Trade Organization
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The establishment of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests (IPF) by the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD)

The CSD, at its third session (April 1995), reviewed progress achieved in the implementation of the Forest Principles and of Chapter 11 of Agenda 21, and established an open-ended ad-hoc Intergovernmental Panel on Forests (IPF) to pursue consensus and co-ordinated proposals for action to support the management, conservation and sustainable development of forests. It was decided that the IPF should meet four times and submit a final report to the fifth session of the CSD which will be held in 1997.

The IPF was tasked to pursue consensus and formulate coordinated proposals for action under 11 issues (programme elements) clustered into five categories of issues for priority action, namely:

I Implementation of United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) decisions related to forests at the national and international level, including an examination of sectoral and cross-sectoral linkages; (includes five Programme Elements I.1-I.5);
II International Cooperation in financial assistance and technology transfer;
III Scientific research, forest assessment and development of criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management; (includes two Programme Elements III.1 and III.2)
IV Trade and environment relating to forest products and services; and
V International organizations and multilateral institutions and instruments including appropriate legal mechanisms. (includes two Programme Elements V.1 and V.2)

The CSD defined the scope of each element of the IPF agenda. With respect to item V.1, which is addressed in this report, it indicated that the IPF should:

> "Develop a clearer view of the work being carried out by international organizations and multilateral institutions and under existing instruments as appropriate, including the Convention on Biological Diversity, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) and the International Tropical Timber Agreement (ITTA), in forest-related issues, including UNCED decisions related to forests, and the institutional linkages emanating therefrom, in order to identify any gaps, areas requiring enhancement, as well as areas of duplication."

The IPF, at its first session, held in New York from 11 to 15 September 1995, indicated that the preparation for Item V.1:

> "would include a report presenting the overview and description of existing institutions and instruments , including their role and mandates *vis a vis* programme elements I to IV. and identifying institutional linkages, gaps, areas requiring enhancement, and any areas of duplication".

At the second session of IPF, held in Geneva from 11 to 22 March 1996, the Programme Element V.1 underwent an initial discussion. Its third session is scheduled for 9 to 20 September 1996 in Geneva, and the fourth and final session will take place in New York in early 1997. The Panel's final conclusions and recommendations are to be submitted to the CSD at its fifth session in April 1997. The CSD will report to a special session of the General Assembly, to be held in June 1997, which will review the progress achieved since UNCED.

I.2 The Swiss Peruvian Initiative on Forests

During the First Session of the IPF the Swiss and the Peruvian Government, jointly offered to support the work of IPF through the preparation of a study on item V.1 of its programme.

For that purpose the Swiss-Peruvian Initiative on Forests (SPIF) invited Governments, through the Chairmen of the Regional Groups in New York, to submit names of experts to be considered for an Independent Expert Group (IEG) to assist in the development of the study. It also invited the Non Governmental Organizations (NGO) community to appoint three experts from their own constituencies. The mandate of the Group supported IPF's mandate as defined by the third session of the CSD as well as the guidance given at the first and second session of the IPF.

At its second session (Geneva, 11-22 March, 1996) the IPF had its initial discussions on Programme Element V.1, based on the Secretary General's Report (E/CN.17/IPF/1996/12). The outcome of those discussions are contained in the Report of the Open-Ended Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Panel on Forests on its Second Session (E/CN.17/1996/24). The IPF made further recommendations regarding the content of the analysis. During the discussions several delegations commented positively on the Swiss-Peruvian Initiative on Forests. At that occasion the Representative of Peru (Co-Chairman of the SPIF) reported on the developments under the SPIF.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 UNCED

The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), held in Rio de Janeiro in June 1992, concluded its deliberations by approving the Rio de Janeiro Declaration on Environment and Development, Agenda 21 and the Non-legally Binding Authoritative Statement for a Global Consensus on the Management, Conservation and Sustainable Development of all Types of Forests.

The General Assembly of the United Nations endorsed the results of UNCED in December 1992 including the proposal to establish a Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) to review progress and evaluate the implementation of the UNCED. The CSD will report on its findings to a Special Session of the General Assembly in 1997, tentatively scheduled for the 9 to 14 June 1997 in New York, USA.

2.2 Post Rio Regional Processes and Initiatives

Since Rio, several governments initiated forest-related processes aimed primarily at the development of criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management. These initiatives, including groups of experts were either organized along lines of geographical regions, forest type, or other common interests or shared problems. Notable among these initiatives were, the Montreal Process, the Helsinki Process, the Tarapoto Process, the Malaysia/Canada Initiative and the India/UK Initiative.

2.3 The Intergovernmental Panel on Forests

The Programme Elements of the work programme of the IPF cover, in-short: I.1 "national forest and land use plans"; I.2 "underlying causes of deforestation and forest degradation"; I.3 "traditional forest related knowledge"; I.4 "afforestation, reforestation, restoration of fragile ecosystems, areas affected by desertification and drought and in forests affected by pollution"; I.5 "countries with low forest cover"; II "coordination, financial resources and technology transfer"; III.1 "assessment and valuation"; III.2 "criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management"; IV "trade in forest products and the environment"; V "international organizations, multilateral institutions and instruments including appropriate legal mechanisms".

2.4 Approach and Methodology of the Work of the Independent Group of Experts

In the context of the above discussion, international organizations, multilateral institutions and existing legal instruments also face the rapidly changing perceptions and demands on forests. The nature of their work is changing and will change significantly in the future in areas ranging from the focus of their assistance at the national level, coordination requirements (institutional, national, regional and international), to arrangements for servicing international policy debate. International organizations, governments, researchers, NGOs and other concerned entities and individuals should help further developing the still evolving knowledge about forest sustainable development and adapting their efforts to the new challenges facing forests worldwide. Thus the rationale for studying the roles, mandates and activities of these organizations in order to assess how best they could serve the future needs of their clients. The ultimate objective of this initiative is to provide a contribution to assess the role of international organizations and instruments in working towards the issues raised in the work programme of the IPF.

The IEG met twice in Geneva. Its first session was held from 5 to 7 March 1996 and its second session held from 24 to 28 June 1996. It comprised of 18 experts from the five United Nations regions and the NGO community. Both meetings were co-chaired by Mr Augusto Freyre and Dr Franz Schmithüsen. The Group invited representatives of some organizations and instruments to address its meetings.

The Group decided that its analysis and assessment of international organizations, multilateral institutions and existing instruments would be done against the framework provided by the Programme Elements of the work programme of IPF, differentiated by seven activities:

- Financing
- Technology Transfer and Cooperation
- Capacity Building
- Information Collection and Dissemination
- Coordination
- Research and Analysis, and
- Policy Formulation

The short descriptions provided in the following overview as well as the ensuing assessment are based on information supplied from four different sources: generally available literature; questionnaires completed by some organizations (FAO, ILO, ITTO, UNEP) in addition to other information supplied by the Organizations;.discussions with representatives of organizations during the meetings of the IEG; and the experience and knowledge of the members of the IEG.

The views expressed in this report are the result of discussions during the meetings in which experts took part in their personal capacities.

3. OVERVIEW OF INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS, MULTILATERAL INSTITUTIONS AND EXISTING LEGAL INSTRUMENTS

3.1 General approach

Based on the mandate given by the CSD and the IPF in relation to programme element V.1 of the IPF agenda, the Independent Expert Group decided to consider in their analysis the international organizations, multilateral institutions and legal instruments/conventions as presented in the following Table:

International Organizations, multilateral institutions and legal instruments to be considered in the IEG report.

ORGANIZATIONS		
FAO	UNESCO/MAB	Helsinki Process
UNDP	UNIDO	Montreal Process
UNEP	WFP	IPCC
ITTO	IFAD	OECD
WTO	World Bank	IUFRO
UNCTAD	Regional Banks	ICRAF
ILO	GEF	CIFOR
LEGAL INSTRUMENTS/ CONVENTIONS		
Forest Principles	World Heritage	
Agenda 21- Chapter 11	ILO - 169 & 107	
Biological Diversity	CITES	
Desertification	Wetlands (Ramsar)	
Climate Change	ACT	
ITTA		

3.2 International Organizations and Multilateral Institutions

International organizations and multilateral institutions, especially those within the UN system, are obliged to primarily respond to decisions and guidance given by their governing bodies. Many international organizations with forest related activities were established at times and in environments with very different approaches to forests compared with the present. To varying degrees the guidance from governments through governing bodies has reflected the evolving perceptions and concerns about forests, and the organizations have responded according to resources made available for implementation. In different international organizations governments are usually represented by different sectoral ministries, often providing narrow perspectives. From an overarching point of view this is somewhat problematic as regards forests, which would demand a more integrated, multi-disciplinary approach. This was recognized in Agenda 21 where in chapter 38 it is stated that "Coordination and mutual complementarity of their efforts to promote integration of environment and development can be enhanced by encouraging countries to maintain positions in the various governing bodies". Even if there are definite drawbacks with the specialization of some of these organizations in approaching forest related problems, in some cases it has resulted in the building up of a critical mass of expertise and resources in some areas of great importance to forests.

A listing with brief descriptions of the mandates and forest-related activities of some international organizations and multilateral institutions is provided below in order to give a sense of scope and focus of these organizations.

Food and Agriculture Organization FAO

Mandate	Technical assistance in land-use planning including forestry and agriculture to developing countries and countries in transition (CIT), (resource management and processing, promotion of the development of the sector to reconcile the interface of social, protection and production factors). Information on all aspects of forestry and primary forest products.
Main forest programmes and issues	Global Forest Resources (assessment, management, protection, conservation, genetic resources, wildlife). Forest Products (harvesting, processing, utilization, marketing and trade, worldwide). Forest Policy and Planning (institutions, policy, statistics, community forestry, national forest action plans, international liaison and information).

United Nations Development Programme UNDP

Mandate	Assist developing countries to accelerate their economic and social development by providing assistance geared to their objectives Implementing agency for Global Environment Facility, leading UN-agency on capacity-building issues
Main forest programmes and issues	Capacity-building programmes to implement Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) (Forest Capacity Programme); Environment, Energy and Natural Resources Programmes to implement Agenda 21 through Capacity 21

United Nations Environment Programme

Mandate	Promote international cooperation in the field of the environment and sustainable development; Keep under review the state of the world environment; Promote acquisition, assessment and exchange of environmental knowledge; Formulate and implement environment programmes within the UN technical agencies
Main forest programmes and issues	Contribution to TFAP and Global Forest Resources Assessments; Pilot projects on integrated forestry management; Ensure environmental considerations in forest related programmes; Prepare methodologies for assessing total value of forests; Prepare methodologies for assessing effects of acid rain; Forest Programme 1996 - 2000

International Tropical Timber Organization ITTO

Mandate	Promote trade on tropical timber; Implement ITTA (1983); Promote the conservation and sustainable management of tropical forests with balance between conservation and utilization; Prevent deforestation in tropical forests; Implementation of ITTA (1994) once it enters into force.
Main forest programmes and issues	Economic information and market intelligence Reforestation and forest development Forest industry Guidelines on SFM, plantations, bio-diversity; natural forest management; multiple-use of hardwood forests; criteria and indicators; models for sustainable production of wood and non-wood products; timber situation; policy development

World Trade Organization WTO

Mandate	Facilitate and liberalize international trade, supervise the settlement of commercial conflicts, recognize the need to protect environment and to promote sustainable development

Main forest programmes and issues	Committee on Trade and Environment: explore link between trade and environmental policies (compatibility between environment protection measures and WTO rights and obligations)

United Nations Conference on Trade and Development UNCTAD

Mandate	Help restructure the traditional patterns of international trade in order to enable developing countries to participate in world commerce.
Main forest programmes and issues	Integrated Programme for Commodities (Tropical Timber). Action on tariffs and non-tariff barriers in the sector of wood and wood products

International Labour Organization ILO

Mandate	Raise work and living standards throughout the world; social and labour aspects of forestry
Main forest programmes and issues	Joint Committee FAO/ECE/ILO on Forest Technology, Management and Technology Technical cooperation, training, employment and development, sectoral activities conditions of work and working environment, industrial relations

Man and Biosphere Programme MAB/UNESCO

Mandate	Develop scientific basis for the rational use and conservation of the resources of the biosphere, including forests.
Main forest programmes and issues	Encourage the establishment of international biosphere reserve network (conservation of genetic resources, ecosystems and bio-diversity; research and monitoring network; association of environmental protection with sustainable land resources conservation)

United Nations Industrial Development Organization UNIDO

Mandate	Promotion and acceleration of industrial development in developing countries with a view to facilitating the establishment of a new international economic order
Main forest programmes and issues	Environmentally sustainable industrial development

World Food Programme WFP

Mandate	Help people combating hunger and poverty, provide life-sustain relief and promote social and economic development

Main forest programmes and issues	Forestry (forest protection committees, nursery, reforestation, forest infrastructures development) Rural development, Transport activities, Human resources development, Social, Land reclamation, Irrigation, Road building

International Fund for Agriculture Development IFAD

Mandate	Mobilize additional financial resources from donors to be made available on concessional terms for agriculture development and the improvement of food production in developing Member States
Main forest programmes and issues	Activities included as thay relate to food security, improvement of nutritional levels and incomes of poorest rural population

World Bank

Mandate	Raise standards of living in the poorer developing countries through the provision of financial resources
Main forest programmes and issues	Lending Programme (industrial forestry and social and environment forestry); Free standing forestry projects; Social or rural development end environment forestry programme; Watershed management/Land use projects

Asian Development Bank

Mandate	Assistance of Developing Member Countries of the Bank
Main forest programmes and issues	Policy and Regulatory Framework; Support to Technological, Policy and Valuation Research; Promoting Public Participation in Forestry Development; Investment Strategies; Cooperation with International and Regional Initiatives; Selection and Design of Investments Projects

African Development Bank

Mandate	Promote economic and social development in its member countries
Main forest programmes and issues	Forestry Policy Paper: derive maximum economic and environmental benefits from forest resources (conservation and rehabilitation of degraded forests; fuelwood and industrial plantations; raising sawn timber production capacity; natural resource conservation; technical and technical assistance)

Inter-American Development Bank

Mandate	Financing development of borrowing member States; supplement private investment; and provide technical assistance for preparation, financing and implementation of development plans and projects
Main forest programmes and issues	Included in rural development programmes, Watershed management activities, national environment programmes, etc. Funding subject to government commitment to sustainable forest management. Support to governmental and non-governmental bodies.

Global Environment Facility

Mandate	Help developing countries protect the global environment by providing grants and concessional funding for activities to address global warming, bio-diversity, international water and ozone depletion
Main forest programmes and issues	Bio-diversity: forest ecosystems (development, strengthening and establishment of sustainable use methods in forestry, wildlife and bio-diversity conservation) Climate change: rural renewable energy, biofuel activities, carbon sink enhancement, restoration, prevention and reduction of land degradation

Montreal Process

Mandate	International Dialogue on Criteria and Indicators for the Conservation and Sustainable Management of Temperate and Boreal Forests
Main forest programmes and issues	Development and Endorsement of the non-legally binding criteria and indicators by 12 developing and developed countries in the northern and southern hemisphere covering almost 90 per cent of temperate and boreal forests; Implementation at national level

Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe (including the Helsinki Process)

Mandate	Cooperation of all countries in the protection and sustainable management of forests in Europe; recommendations and themes to be further developed by international organizations and their subsidiary bodies; process as reference for other fora

Main forest programmes and issues	Monitoring forest ecosystems; genetic resources; forest fires; mountain forests; research network on physiology and forest ecosystems; Guidelines for SFM, conservation of bio-diversity, adaptation to climate change; (Helsinki Process) Cooperation with countries in transition; Criteria and indicators for the sustainable management of forests in Europe

Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change IPCC (WMO - UNEP)

Mandate	Periodical assessment of the scientific and technical information related to the impact of climate change and adaptation response to it
Main forest programmes and issues	Improvement of forestry and agriculture, potential for increasing energy efficiency, cleaner energy sources and technology Forestry options: slowing currently deforestation and forest degradation, increasing forest biomass, improving use of wood, afforestation

Organization on Economic Cooperation and Development

Mandate	To achieve the highest sustainable economic growth and employment; to promote economic and social welfare through the OECD area and to stimulate and harmonize its members' efforts in favour of developing countries.
Main forest programmes and issues	Incorporated within mandate of the Development Assistance Committee

International Union of Forestry Research Organizations IUFRO

Mandate	Promote international cooperation in scientific studies embracing research related to forestry. Facilitating the world exchange of ideas, creating contacts, encouraging common research programmes, disseminate research results.
Main forest programmes and issues	Forest environment and silviculture; Forest plants and forest protection; Forest Operations and techniques; Inventory, Growth, Yield and Management Systems; Forest Products; Social, Economic, Information and Policy Sciences. Task Force on Air-Pollution/Forest Decline Special Programme for Developing Countries

International Centre for Research in Agro-Forestry ICRAF

Mandate	Increase social, economic and nutritional well-beingof people of developing countries. Research to integrate woody perennials in farming and related land-use systems. Mitigate tropical deforestation through improved agroforestry systems
Main forest programmes and issues	Improvement of agroforestry systems. Multipurpose-tree improvement; Strengthening education capacity of universities and technical colleges. Information to support agroforestry research, training and development

Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR)

Mandate	Research and related activities in forest systems and forestry for the sustainable well-being of people in developing countries
Main forest programmes and issues	Sustainable production of multiple goods and services from natural forests; management and Conservation of Biodiversity; Improved forestry options on degraded and low-potential sites.

3.3 Existing Legal Instruments

Forest issues covered by existing legal instruments are somewhat different in nature from those covered by organizations and institutions as they are governed by legal commitments agreed among countries. They are in some cases relevant to some functions of forests, but not all. Some of them have only recently come into force and their operational capacity and effectiveness still remains to be seen. In most cases the operational activities of the conventions are decided upon by their respective Conference of Parties (COP).

Several international agreements and conventions of global or regional scope, which have some bearing on forests have been developed, signed or come into force during the last three decades, such as , for example, the Convention on International Trade of Endangered Species of Fauna and Flora (CITES), the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat or Ramsar Convention, the Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Convention on Biological Diversity, etc. None of them were developed with a direct orientation towards sustainable forest management but have or may have a strong influence on conservation and sustainable forest management.

The Wetlands Convention, ITTA and CITES as well as the ACT have been in force for a number of years and are therefore fully operational while the FCCC and the CBD have come into force only recently and are still in their initial phases of implementation.

The Independent Expert Group selected the following instruments for consideration in their report. These instruments are different in nature as well as in their level of implementation. The listing is followed by short descriptions of the instruments:

Agenda 21 - Chapter 11 (1992)
Forest Principles (1992)
Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)(1992)
United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)(1994)
Framework Convention on Climate Change (FCCC)(1992)
International Tropical Timber Agreement (ITTA) (1983) (1994)
UNESCO - Heritage (1975)
ILO-107 & 169
Convention on International Trade of Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) (1973)
Ramsar Convention (1971)
Amazonian Cooperation Treaty (ACT) (1978)

Chapter 11 of Agenda 21, and the Non-legally Binding Authoritative Statement of principles for a global consensus on the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests (The Forest Principles)

Two legal instruments containing provisions covering all five programme elements of IPF agenda are Chapter 11 of Agenda 21, and the Non-legally Binding Authoritative Statement of principles for a global consensus on the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests (The Forest Principles).

These two instruments reflect an integral approach which recognizes the multiple roles of forests, as well as its multiple values. Chapter 11 of Agenda 21, and the Forest Principles recognized many of the complex issues facing forest.

Convention on Biological Diversity

The Convention on Biological Diversity, establishes as objectives: "the conservation of biological diversity, the sustainable use of its components and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources, including by appropriate access to genetic resources and by appropriate transfer of relevant technologies, taking into account all rights over those resources and to technologies, and by appropriate funding"

Among the specific obligations of Parties to the Convention we can find those of developing national strategies, undertaking the identification and monitoring of components of biological diversity, establishing systems of protected areas, facilitating access to genetic resources,

facilitating access to technology and biotechnology, protecting the knowledge of traditional and indigenous communities, providing financial resources for developing countries.

The fulfillment of these obligations may result in benefits for all forest areas, but the Convention does not address specifically all issues in the terms requested under Chapter 11 or the Forest Principles, that is, taking into account its multiple roles and values.

The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification

The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification was opened for signature in October 1994 and is expected to enter into force by early 1997. Member States, once the Convention enters into force, will have to decide on the location of its Permanent Secretariat. At the time of writing this report 34 countries have ratified the Convention. Fifty are necessary for its entering into force. Three countries are offering to host the Permanent Secretariat: Canada, Germany and Spain, an issue which should be resolved by the Conference of parties, once the Convention enters into force.

The Convention to Combat Desertification places a strong emphasis on land uses, with special provisions to urgently solve the problems of African countries, and addressing specifically the protection of traditional knowledge, and some trade practices that may cause desertification.

The Convention to Combat Desertification makes little direct reference to forests. It is clear however that in the process of measuring the various degrees of the desertification process, the loss of vegetation, including trees, forests and other wooded lands, is to be taken into consideration. Furthermore it is difficult to consider combating desertification at the field level without including into the plans and projects a forest or tree planting component. The Convention underlines the need to take full consideration of the special needs and circumstances of affected developing countries Parties, particularly those needing assistance. The Convention advocates for an integrated approach addressing the physical, biological and socio-economic aspects of the process of desertification and drought. Programmes and plans are to be developed ensuring the participation of local populations and communities. It should improve cooperation and coordination at sub-regional, regional and international levels.

Article 8 of the Convention refers to the need to encourage the coordination of activities carried out under this convention with those of other Conventions in particular the FCCC and the CBD. The Parties shall encourage the conduct of joint programmes, particularly in the field of research, training, systematic observation and information collection and exchange. The Convention should promote the development of Regional, Sub-regional and National action programmes. Guidelines for the preparation of action programmes and their exact focus and content for particular sub-regions and regions are set out in the regional implementation annexes of the Convention.

The Framework Convention on Climate Change

The objective of this Convention is *"the stabilization of greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system"*. This convention recognizes the important ecological role of forests, as carbon sinks, and in implementing greenhouse gas reductions, countries may impact in a positive manner the conditions of forests, either increasing the amount of land under forest cover, or conserving the existing forest areas, but the Convention does not address other forestry related issues.

International Tropical Timber Agreement (ITTA)

The ITTA was concluded in 1983 and renegotiated between 1992 and 1994. In 1994 a successor Agreement was concluded which is not yet in force but the national constitutional processes are underway for its entry into force. This agreement is restricted to producers and consumers of tropical hardwood timber. It is a commodity agreement to promote utilization and conservation of tropical timber resources. A key strategy is the measures adopted to ensure exports of tropical timber and timber products from sustainable sources by the year 2000.

Provisions of the 1994 agreement with particular relevance to the IPF programme of work are:

Article 1 (b) which provides "a forum for consultation to promote non-discriminatory trade practices";
Article 1(d) which seeks "to enhance the capacity of members to implement a strategy for achieving exports of tropical timber from sustainably managed sources by the year 2000";
Article 1(e) which "promotes the expansion and diversification of international trade in tropical timber from sustainable sources by improving the structural conditions in international markets.....by taking into account .....prices which reflect the costs of sustainable forest management and which are remunerative and equitable for members, and the improvement of market access";
Article 1(j) which encourages "members to support and develop industrial tropical timber reforestation and forest management activities as well as rehabilitation of degraded forest land, with due regard for the interests of local communities dependent on forest resources";
Article 1 (l) which encourages "members to develop policies aimed at sustainable utilization and conservation of timber producing forests and their genetic resources and at maintaining ecological balance in the regions concerned, in the context of tropical timber trade"; and
Article 1(n) which encourages "information sharing on the international timber market".

Acceptance of the Objective Year 2000 by both producer and consumer countries (the latter in a separate statement attached to the ITTA) has fueled debate and action on internationally agreed criteria and indicators by which to measure sustainability. ITTA is also one of the key fora for the on-going debates on trade and environment in forest products, in particular timber certification.

UNESCO Convention for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage

The emphasis of UNESCO Convention for the protection of the world cultural and natural heritage is on the protection of natural and cultural heritage of outstanding universal value from the historical, aesthetic, ethnological, anthropological, scientific, geological or natural point of view. This instrument has a mechanism which enables the establishment of *"recognized sites"*, which may receive some kind of support under the convention. Under this convention, as in the previous case, it is possible to think that by protecting sites of universal value the international community also includes forest sites of particular importance.

ILO 169 Convention

The ILO 169 Convention, which superseded ILO 107, establishes the obligation, for State Parties, to develop jointly with the interested peoples, a coordinated and systematic action to protect the rights of indigenous peoples, and to ensure their integrity. The ILO 169 Convention contains provisions regarding the protection of land-use rights of indigenous people and the protection of their traditional life styles. The protection of these rights is an important action which may result in the sustainable use of forests owned, used or inhabited by indigenous communities, although this Convention does not expressly refer to forestry issues.

Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora

CITES aims to control or limit the international trade on endangered species of wild fauna and flora. Endangered species of trees may fall under the regulations of this convention. The problem with the approach of CITES, is that it only refers to those species which are endangered, and definitely does not have an integral approach, since it only refers to international trade in such species.

CITES has been dealing with endangered forest species of wild fauna and flora. It has recently created within its structure a temporary Timber Working Group (1994). The Timber Working Group shall:

a) review the trade in timber of species included in Appendix II before the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, based on information included in the annual reports, Notification to the Parties No. 787, reports from the Secretariat and information provided by the Parties involved in this trade; and

b) provide recommendations to the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties on the possible need to amend certain administrative and enforcement procedures for the implementation of the Convention for trade in specimens of species included in Appendices II and III.

CITES application may have a positive role in the conservation and sustainable management of forest species through the regulation of trade of endangered forest species (not only timber species). Conflicts may eventually occur in relation with international agreements within the frame of the WTO or ITTO.

Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat (Ramsar Convention)

The Convention on wetlands of international importance especially as waterfowl habitat, known as the Ramsar Convention, imposes on Contracting Parties the obligation to "formulate and implement their planning so as to promote the conservation of the wetlands included in the List, and as far as possible the wise use of wetlands in their territory". The biological relation between wetlands and forest ecosystems is well known by experts. Departing from this acknowledgment, it is possible to think that by protecting wetlands, forestry ecosystems will be protected, and vice-versa.

The Amazon Cooperation Treaty

The Amazon Cooperation Treaty (ACT) is a regional treaty among countries of the Amazonian Basin: Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Peru, Suriname and Venezuela. Together, these countries possess over half the world's tropical forests. The ACT is aimed at the promotion of harmonious development of their respective Amazonian territories towards producing equitable and mutually beneficial results and achieve also the preservation of the environment, and the conservation and rational utilization of natural resources of those territories.

The ACT does not directly mention forests but addresses issues related to natural resources, flora and fauna, the need to maintain ecological balance , the preservation of species, close cooperation in the fields of scientific and technological research, plus several considerations regarding social and economic development within the territories concerned.

IV. ASSESSMENT AND INDEPENDENT EXPERT GROUP STATEMENTS.

General observations

Following UNCED practically all international organizations and multilateral institutions related to forests and forestry made significant efforts to respond to the decisions of the Conference. This is mostly due to the fact that countries attending UNCED are member countries of those organizations and participate in the deliberations of their respective governing bodies. Furthermore the decisions of UNCED represented the willingness of a large part of the world's society. Those decisions included the participation of major groups in the decision-making process.

International organizations and multilateral institutions had however to internalize those decisions within the framework of their respective basic texts, mandates, by-laws and structures and within the limitations of their own capacities and budgets.

Even though general mandates and by-laws of these organizations are of interest to the objectives of this study, the countries and people concerned would be more interested in the opportunity, quality and quantity of programmes, projects and local activities.

It is also clear that in some cases the general mandates of organizations can be somehow overstretched or bypassed due to a series of factors including specific local or national needs, project flexibility and the influence of other external factors.

Within the process of identifying gaps, duplications and areas subject to enhancement one useful approach is to also consider the operational level. Due however to the short deadlines within which this study had to be developed that level of analysis could not be envisaged.

The Independent Expert Group (IEG), while looking into the programmes, projects and activities reported by organizations and other concerned bodies recognized that some of those programmes, projects or activities are not necessarily involving all regions, countries or types of forests and are not always as successful, timely and efficient as they are expected to be.

The IEG also noted that a difference should be made between programmes and activities which examine an area as compared to those which lead to addressing the problem. Therefore while most organizations selected for review seem to produce information regarding the IPF programme areas, as they relate to their respective terms of reference, and many have specific policies related to those areas, they are less successful in helping the countries to implement them on the ground through concrete assistance.

The World Bank and the Regional Banks have recently and with still relative little effect, initiated the incorporation of the UNCED recommendations in their forestry related policies. In some cases bank policies on other sectors of economy are encouraging conflicting situations as related to sustainable forests management.

UN Regional Economic Commissions have been unevenly dealing with some aspects of forest development but seem to be slow in incorporating UNCED decisions into their current activities.

It is however clear to the IEG that the responsibility of international organizations, multilateral institutions and the orientation of existing instruments lies on their respective secretariats but also in the guidance given to them by their member states and on the financial resources that are made available for their operation.

The IEG identified the need for enhanced international high level dialogue on forest issues. It also noted the value of the ongoing dialogue within the frame of the IPF and stressed the need to ensure continuation of this dialogue which includes major groups.

I Implementation of UNCED decisions related to forest at the national and international levels including an examination of sectoral and cross-sectoral linkages.

I.1 National forestry and land use plans

Within this programme element the organizations and instruments to be reviewed include FAO, UNDP, UNEP, WB, CBD, CCD, ITTO, CIFOR, ICRAF and the Regional Banks. Their basic mandates and programmes are different in nature as are their respective procedures, areas of involvement and experience and capabilities. Some of them operate with a great deal of independence while others are used to coordinate at least part of their activities with other bodies. For example UNEP's main mandate is to play a catalytic role while the World Bank and the Regional Banks have funding functions. The scope of ITTO is fundamentally oriented to tropical hardwood timber. CIFOR concentrates on research and so far has focused mostly on tropical forests.

It is clear that wherever the need for land use plans is referred or underlined, the responsibility for its formulation and implementation still lies with the national authorities and organizations. Many developing countries, particularly the Least Developed Countries (LDC), will need appropriate information, transfer of technology, technical cooperation and financial assistance for their formulation and implementation.

The organizations specialized in funding have only recently initiated consideration of forest resources in a more comprehensive way. In the past forest lending had been mostly oriented to the increase of timber production for industrial and trade purposes.

The Convention on Biological Diversity as well as the Convention to Combat Desertification refer specifically to the need of developing land use plans. The IEG underlined the importance of taking forest into consideration when developing these land use plans and the need to ensure local participation in their formulation. The need for land use plans is emphasized by the CSD and has also been referred to within the Forest Principles.

The IEG expressed its concern for the fact that most national and international activities in forestry planning are still too focused on the narrow view of forests as a timber producing resource while paying little attention to other goods and services produced by the forests, and to the social and ecological aspects of sustainable forest management, as referred in the Forest Principles. The IEG pointed out that cross-sectorial analysis of national forestry and land-use plans in developed countries was needed.

The IEG identified the need for enhanced high level intergovernmental policy dialogue on forest planning and management which include participation of major groups.

During at least the last two decades, international assistance has been mainly oriented towards tropical forests. Temperate forest was mainly perceived as a resource of developed countries. It is only recently that all types of forests are being addressed with a more balanced approach. The assessment of the situation of boreal forests has only recently been addressed by the international community and the existence of temperate forests in developing countries recognized. Furthermore, more attention has been given by international organizations to dense forests while wooded lands such as natural climax boreal forest areas, wooded savannas, cerrado and other scarcely wooded lands have been ignored or given insufficient attention.

In both the World Bank and the FAO there is a lack of a cross-sectoral approach. In the FAO this is partly because the work of the Forestry Department is not well coordinated with the Agriculture Department.

The World Bank's 1991 Forest policy emphasized the need for cross-sectoral approaches. However the Forest Policy Implementation Review of 1994 had shown that the Bank pays inadequate attention to the impact on forests of its own non-forest sector lending. Concern was expressed about the problems being experienced by the Central Forest Unit of the Bank, which had been created to link the work of the Bank's Agriculture and Environment Departments but has now been downsized.

The need for a multidisciplinary approach was stressed. FAO's Committe on Forestry (COFO) was considered to be dominated by forestry industry specialists, which reinforce the narrow sectoral approach. However, it was noted that the influence of the Forest Principles was beginning to be felt at the COFO discussions.

Most international organizations need to increase their cross-sectoral analysis as it relates to rural development, forestry, agriculture, environmental conservation and other related activities including the global implications for all types of forests. This is, in most cases a reflection of existing administrative structures and financial mechanisms but also a model derived from traditional administrative structures at country level. Recent developments within some of these organizations can be attributed to UNCED deliberations and decisions.

Lending policies of some banks do not pay sufficient attention to the needs of cross sectoral analysis, although some developments have been witnessed in some of them as is the case of the Forest Policies of the Asian Development Bank.

Land tenure issues as they relate to landless farmers, indigenous peoples and forest dwellers need increased attention by international organizations as well as adequate mechanisms and structures to ensure local participation within the decision making process. Positive developments in this sector can be perceived within the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Convention to Combat

Desertification as well as in Chapter 26 of Agenda 21 and in the ILO Convention 169 on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples.

The need for national governments and international organizations to incorporate the concepts of the recent conventions into national planning was stressed by the IEG. The international organizations should cooperate in filling these gaps through capacity-building efforts.

In relation with activities carried out under the Framework Convention on Climate Change (FCCC) and particularly by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) results of research related to forest resources should be followed closely by international organizations and possibly incorporated to national planning efforts.

The IEG noted the duplication of efforts in the area of planning frameworks under different institutions and instruments such as the NFP, NEA, NAP exercises as well as in the CBD, which leads to problems in sectoral planning and to uncoordinated national planning.

I.2 Underlying causes of deforestation

Organizations and instruments most closely concerned with this programme element include FAO, UNEP, UNCTAD, UNDP, WTO, ITTO, WB, Regional Banks and the CCD.

Most agencies of the system have worked on the identification of the causes and effects of deforestation. General conclusions have been derived from those efforts but experience has shown that concrete action geared towards reversing the current trends has not been successful enough. There needs to be a better understanding of those causes as well as on the consequences of deforestation and on the levels at which action is needed.

The IEG perceived a lack of clear mandates, coordination and action in this area and the need to fill the gap. Clear action oriented decisions in these area are urgently needed.

Even though changes in the current deforestation trends are to be addressed at the local and national level and within sovereign countries, most developing countries will need international cooperation to significantly reverse the situation. Cooperation for this purpose will not only be necessary for direct reforestation purpose but for coping with the primary causes of deforestation.

It was noted that the conversion of forests to agricultural lands by displaced and landless peasants was an urgent problem requiring an institutional response. The lack of an international agency effectively assisting national agrarian reforms was noted. Although an international declaration expressing a commitment to agrarian reform (the Peasants' Charter) had been adopted by 145 countries in 1979, and had become a central aspect of FAO's work, the programme has been virtually abandoned. Landlessness, on the other hand, has increased. The World Bank also argues that it cannot finance agrarian reforms and no longer applies its 1976 policy on land reform.

The role of organizations such as FAO, UNDP, UNEP, ITTO, the World Bank and the Regional Banks should be better coordinated in order to ensure efficient action. The long term effects of WTO provisions as they relate to this process, should be closely monitored. UNCTAD is working on equitable conditions in forest products trade, combined with sustainable forest management practices, which could be a significant tool in reverting the deforestation process.

I.3 Protection and use of traditional forest-related knowledge.

In relation with this programme areas the IEG considered that the organizations and instruments that are more closely related include FAO, ILO, UNDP, UNEP, UNESCO/MAB, UNRISD. WHO, the GEF, ICRAF, CIFOR, CCD and CBD .

This programme area, even though highly relevant to sustainable forest management, has been insufficiently developed within the international organizations' programmes. Traditional knowledge is recognized in the ILO 169 convention as well as in the CBD and the CCD. The subject should be specifically incorporated in the mandates and programmes of the most relevant international organizations. Mechanisms to better understand the value and applications of traditional knowledge are to be developed. Despite the relevance and interest in this subject area. it was recognized by the IEG that there is still a lot more required by international organizations in relation to the compilation, utilization, valuation and protection of this knowledge that would orient the development of adequate mechanisms. The benefits of the utilizations of traditional knowledge should revert in some way to the guardians of that know-how.

The outcome of the implementation process of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Convention to Combat Desertification in this area are still to be assessed. It is to be reminded that CBD states the need to develop national legislation with respect to the promotion of traditional knowledge. Other bodies involved in the process at the international level are UNESCO both through its MAB Programme and the World Heritage Convention, and the FAO international undertaking on plant genetic resources for food and agriculture, which recognizes "Farmers Rights".

The IEG reviewed the role and influence of the TRIPS aspects of GATT to this theme, noting the provisions for *sui-generis* national legal IPR regimes. Apart from the CBD and related text in the ILO 169 Convention, the only international agreement dealing directly with this issue can be found in Andean Pact decisions. While recognizing that national governments have the ultimate authority on this matter, it was felt that regional initiatives should be promoted to address the issue.

It was noted that a prior condition to the protection of indigenous and traditional knowledge, is the need to protect communities rights and access to land, resources and the recognition of their own institutions. Only ILO 169 convention touches upon this issue, although the OAS and the UN are considering draft declarations on this regard..

I.4 Afforestation, reforestation, restoration of fragile eco-systems, areas affected by desertification and/or drought and in forests affected by pollution.

International organizations and instruments most concerned with the subject of areas affected by desertification and/or drought include FAO, UNEP, UNDP, CCD while the problems related to the effects of airborne pollutants on forests have been mostly addressed by UNEP and UNECE.

The Convention to Combat Desertification has an explicit mandate to deal with this subject and in particular under the Annexes. UNEP has developed since the United Nations Conference on Desertification (UNCOD) specific programmes on this area, including an Activity Centre. Success of UNCOD recommendations were inadequate, probably due to political and financial weakness. Other organizations such as FAO, UNDP-UNSO, the World Bank and the International Fund for Agriculture Development (IFAD) have also developed activities in this area. Their programmes on rural infrastructure, pastoral development, irrigation and forestry have all impacts on these fragile ecosystems. The UNESCO MAB programme has developed research in this areas as well as IUFRO. ICRAF has also been working in this area. Increased research in tree species for drylands is necessary.

Further implementation of the CCD may provide an appropriate framework for action and coordination, particularly in research, and technical cooperation and information. The CCD strongly support collaboration and coordination with other conventions and institutions. Several international organizations have been participating in the early stages of preparation for the implementation of the Convention and in particular, UNEP, IFAD and UNDP/UNSO. The absence of adequate research structures for forestry research as related to dryland forestry should also be addressed.

The IEG pointed out that the CCD stresses the need for participatory mechanisms and the need for land tenure reforms to ensure local control and management based on land security in order to effectively combat the problems. International organizations need to build up their capacity to assist countries to meet this need, and include more expertise in land tenure issues.

Concurrently with the discussions of the IEG another country led initiative sponsored by Cape Verde, Portugal and Senegal is addressing the subject with a more comprehensive approach. The conclusions of that initiative should be taken into considerations in the further development of this issue.

There is a growing concern about the transboundary affects of airborne pollutants. Therefore there is a need for collaborative action in this area. Action, however should be taken at regional levels and in specific areas where the problem exists. It was noted that the Convention on Long-

Range Transboundary Air Pollution was limited in its geographical scope to Europe. Action should focus on emissions control rather than in adopting mitigatory measures in downwind areas. UNEP and the ECE have assisted in developing methodologies for assessing the impact of airborne pollutants on forests.

The Group noted that radioactive pollution in forests as well as dispersion of radioactive particles through, inter_alia, forest fires need to be addresses adequately by strengthening relevant programmes of the IAEA and UN-ECE.

I.5 Needs of countries with low forest cover

International organizations and instruments most concerned with this subject area include FAO, UNCTAD, UNDP, UNEP, ITTO, UNITAR, CCD, ICRAF, and IFAD.

The concept of low forest cover is not sufficiently clear as there are still varying approaches and definitions in use. Both the CBD and the CCD could address this issue but the implementation phase of these instruments are still in their very early stages. Future policies and programmes at the international institutional level will need to be strengthened or formulated accordingly with the needs of those areas.

II International cooperation in financial assistance and technology transfer

International organizations and instruments most concerned with this subject area include FAO, UNDP, WB, WFP, IFAD, ITTO, CBD, FCCC, GEF and the Regional Banks,

Technology transfer appears to be the area given the least attention by international organizations. FAO has contribute in some measure to the transfer of technology in resource assessment, timber harvesting, forest management and reforestation within its basic mandate and in collaboration with other funding agencies such as UNDP and bilateral organizations. The
UNDP has been involved in the transfer of technology as part of its development activities at national level. The World Bank and the Regional Banks have also assisted individual countries through loans and grants in the transfer of technologies for the processing of timber produce.

Other institutions involved in this activities are UNCTAD, UNIDO and UNITAR.

The international institutions need to strengthen their work in technology transfer and capacity building. Traditional knowledge should be incorporated in these programmes.

Furthermore information regarding existence and accessibility to technology transfer sources should be facilitated. Acquisition of technology available in the public domain should be promoted.

Chapter 11 of Agenda 21 identifies the need for technology transfer related to forests and forestry. The IEG reviewed the activities of ITTO, UNDP, UNIDO and CIFOR. The Group felt that this area should be reinforced and that international mechanisms could be considered to facilitate transfer of technology. This specific role could be attributed to one organization in order to identify needs, sources and to promote transfer. Current financial constraints could hamper further development of this subject particularly when considering that a substantive part of technology has to be purchase in the public domain. Emphasis should be anyhow given to environmentally friendly technology.

Coordination of bilateral and multilateral assistance.

The IEG believe that there is an increasing need for better coordination between multilateral agencies, funding sources and bilateral donors at the national level. The international systems should secure additional funding from public and private sources and develop strategies and innovative procedures. The significant efforts in funding made at the local level should be better assessed in order to provide a more balanced picture of the efforts being made. Non-monetary contributions done by local communities should be considered in this analysis.

Under current procedures there is a strong competition in securing funds by the respective international organizations very often addressing the same donors.

Attempts to revamp the TFAP had proposed an international coordination mechanism including NGOs and indigenous people, but was not agreeble to the FAO Conference. The Consultative Group established in its place by the FAO has never met. There is a lack of an effective mechanism for donor coordination which includes the participation of major groups.

The group underlined the need for increased funding of United Nations Organizations and the need to identify funding sources for action at the national level. The Group considered there was room for improvement in the coordination of financing of UN Agencies. Concern was expressed about the degree of conditionality adopted even in concessional financing.

There is a need to create a database of different multilateral agencies, their programmes and funds available so that countries can access those programmes which suit their individual needs.

Existing funding rules and mechanisms within the CBD and the GEF were considered by the Group. The considerable discrepancies between the GEF Global Benefits and the concept of funding incremental costs in relation to biodiversity conservation was highlighted. The IEG also noted that indigenous peoples are concerned that strict application of the "global benefit" criterion poses an obstacle to support for their initiatives.

III Scientific research, forest assessment and development of criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management.

III.1 Assessing and valuing multiple benefits of forests

The IEG felt that FAO, UNEP, the WB, ITTO CIFOR, ICRAF and IUFRO, are the main international organizations and instruments related to this programme area.

Regarding the assessment of multiple benefits of forests some preliminary data bases have been developed by some international organizations but only covering restricted segments. Basic methodologies are still to be developed and agreed upon.

There is still a lack of appropriate methodologies to ascribe values in a comprehensive approach to forests resources and in particularly when it refers to ecological services and social benefits. UNEP has promoted the development in collaboration with FAO and the World Bank of some preliminary studies on this subject. However, despite the recommendations of Chapter 11 of Agenda 21 little progress has been accomplished.

The IEG noted that it would be mutually beneficial and enriching to ensure effective cooperation between FAO's forest resource assessment programme and the initiative to harmonize reporting requirements under various Convention, particularly CBD, FCCC and CCD.

The work done by the International Boreal Forest Research Association was noted by the IEG. It was also mentioned that OECD is carrying out a study of forest resources to assess multiple benefits of forests. There is still a pressing need for global data bases on all types of forests. Some of this need could be considered within the development of the Global Terrestrial Observations System (GTOS).

Efforts should be carried out through an open, transparent and participatory decision-making process that should include all interested parties including indigenous and local communities. Much international financing of conservation efforts did not observe such principles and caused problems such as denial of land rights and forced relocation.

It was queried whether the FAO's forest assessment process duplicated the Global Biodiversity Assessment of UNEP. The shortage of resources for the FAO's forests assessment process was noted. The problem stemmed partly from the fact that the FAO budget is discussed by representatives from the Ministries of Agriculture, which in most cases do not prioritize forests.

III.2 Criteria and Indicators

Since the conclusion of UNCED several initiatives have been launched to address the issue of sustainable forest management, including work on criteria and indicators. In order to approach the

issue it was felt necessary to open discussion on the meaning of SFD and to develop the basic criteria and indicators which would help in evaluating forest status.

The Helsinki Process, the Tarapoto Process, developed under the Amazon Cooperation Treaty and the Montreal Process, have developed different but comparable sets of criteria and indicators. ITTO, in the meantime has developed criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management focused on tropical hardwood forests. It was noted that not all forested countries are involved in these processes. This can still be considered as the early stages of an evolving subject and one on which the final acceptance, applications and real effects are to be seen. There is still political disagreement on the eventual global use of Criteria and Indicators as they exist today.

Following the proliferation of Criteria and Indicators processes FAO is trying to harmonize the current results.

It was noted that most forests are inhabited. In order to be in accordance with the Forest Principles and Agenda 21 criteria and indicators processes must take into account the rights and interests of these peoples.

IV Trade and environment relating to forest products and services

The IEG considered that FAO, WTO, UNCTAD, CITES and ITTO (ITTA-1994) are, within this area, the most relevant organizations and instruments to be considered.

CITES concerned with international trade of endangered species of flora and fauna has established recently a Timber Working Group to analyze mechanisms for the control of timber from some tree species included in appendixes II and III of that convention.

UNCTAD, concerned with analysis of global trade practices and with commodity agreements has also been looking into the subject of timber labeling.

WTO concerned with global trade rules and practices has established a committee on environment and trade.

FAO has a database on forest products and prices.

Certification and labeling schemes are proliferating as these measures are perceived as one possible tool to promote sustainable forest management. The passable procedures, scopes and effects are still under discussion and common views, even among producing or among consuming countries, are not yet agreed upon.

Annex I

List of Participants to the First and Second Sessions of the Independent Expert Group of the Swiss-Peruvian Initiative on Forests

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Annex 2

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Annex 3 Profile Sample

SWISS-PERUVIAN INITIATIVE ON FORESTS
Report of the Independent Expert Group

Report on International Organizations, Chapter 1:
Overview on organizations

"Portrait" of the organization

max. 2 pages for level 1-organization, 1 page for level 2 and 3-organization

Name	
Mandate	
Organization	
Forest and forestry programmes	
Activities within the forest and forestry programmes	1. 2. 3. 4.
Human resources for forest and forestry programmes	
Financial resources for forest and forestry programmes	
Main results of the last audit or evaluation, year	

References:

1. Union of International Associations (1995): Yearbook of International Organizations 1995/96 (32nd edition). Vol 1 organization descriptions and cross references. K-G. Saur Verlag München. p.

Annex 4 **Questionnaire Sample**

Organisation: *European Forest Agency*

Programme Element IPF: **I.1. National Forests Plans and Programmes**

Priority given to this element in the organisation: (9=higher, 1=lower, 0=none)

Description of activities	Financing	Technology transfer & cooperation	Capacity building Education, Training	Information collection, dissemination	Coordination	Research & Analysis	Policy formulation
1. Training in evaluation of policies	national Europe		national Europe		Europe		national Europe
2.		**SAMPLE**					
3.							
4.							

Information required: level (local, national, regional or global) and geographical frame of these activities

Resources allocated for these activities: *1 mio CHF p.a.*

Organisation to implement these activities: *1 division (10 persons) of the organisation*

Collaboration with other organisations: *UN-ECE, FAO, ILO*

Participation of local populations and major groups in these activities: *local populations, local NGOs*

UN

UNITED NATIONS

E

Economic and Social Council

Distr.
GENERAL

E/CN.17/IPF/1996/27
29 August 1996

Original: ENGLISH

COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Panel on Forests
Third session
Geneva, 9-20 September 1996
Item 2 of the provisional agenda*

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UNITED NATIONS
COLLECTION

IMPLEMENTATION OF FOREST-RELATED DECISIONS OF THE UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT AT THE NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL LEVELS, INCLUDING AN EXAMINATION OF SECTORAL AND CROSS-SECTORAL LINKAGES

Note verbale dated 22 August 1966 from the Permanent Mission of Australia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

The Permanent Mission of Australia to the United Nations presents its compliments to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and has the honour to refer to a letter from Ambassador Richard Butler dated 25 July 1996, in which Ambassador Butler requested that the report of the International Conference on Certification and Labelling of Products from Sustainably Managed Forests, held in Brisbane, Australia, from 26-31 May 1996, be circulated as a document to the meeting of the Intergovernmental Panel of Forests, to be held in Geneva from 9 to 20 September 1996.

Attached to this note verbale is a copy of the report, which is printed in English, French and Spanish. The Permanent Mission of Australia would be grateful for your assistance in circulating the attached report to the above-mentioned Geneva meeting.

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* E/CN.17/IPF/1996/13.

GE.96-51584 (E)

ANNEX

CONCLUSIONS OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON CERTIFICATION AND LABELLING OF PRODUCTS FROM SUSTAINABLY MANAGED FORESTS

The Conference came to the following conclusions, based on its workshop discussions in which all delegates were able to participate, and recommends their appropriate consideration by the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests:

1. Sustainable forest management is the main goal shared by all participants.

2. Certification and labelling are potentially useful tools among many others to promote sustainable forest management.

3. The efficacy of certification and labelling for promoting sustainable forest management needs to be further evaluated.

4. Approaches to sustainable forest management, including certification and labelling, will depend on local, regional and national conditions, including forest type, land tenure and ownership patterns, systems of government, involvement of stakeholders including forest owners, community, indigenous people, business, labour, NGOs, and other interested parties.

5. Both performance standards and environmental management systems are complementary and important components for the assessment of sustainable forest management.

6. There is currently insufficient information to determine the extent of the market demand for certified products.

7. There are a number of issues that merit further consideration and questions that need to be further explored with respect to certification and labelling, including:

   - costs and benefits;
   - market implications;
   - the scientific basis for defining and measuring sustainable forest management;
   - governance and credibility of certification schemes;
   - the roles of Governments and international institutions/organisations;
   - consistency with international agreements;
   - harmonisation/mutual recognition of/between schemes;
   - the trade impacts of certification and labelling; and
   - the role of environmental, economic and social objectives in achieving SFM.

Conference delegates recorded their thanks to the Australian Government for organising and hosting the Conference, and to the Australian people for their hospitality.

30 May 1996

REPORT OF THE CHAIRS OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON CERTIFICATION AND LABELLING OF PRODUCTS FROM SUSTAINABLY MANAGED FORESTS HELD IN BRISBANE, AUSTRALIA, 26-31 MAY 1996

1. PREAMBLE

This report summarises the Chairs' views of the outcomes of the Conference, and is submitted to the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests (IPF) for its consideration. The report identifies issues about which there was agreement, as well as those about which there were genuinely held differences of opinion.

At the invitation of the Government of Australia, 239 representatives from 57 countries met in Brisbane, Australia, from 26 to 31 May 1996 at a Conference to consider the certification of forest management practices and the labelling of products derived from those forests. There were 143 international participants, of which intergovernmental organisations had 10 representatives, governments had 75 representatives and non-government organisations (representing among others the environmental interests, industry and forest industry workers) had 58 representatives. There were 96 domestic participants. Participants at the Conference covered the wide range of stakeholders and interest groups in the certification and labelling debate. Participants were invited in their personal capacity as experts.

The Chair of the Conference was Denis Cullity, Chair of the Australian Forest and Wood Products Research and Development Corporation and the Co-Chair was Dr Christina Amoako-Nuama, Minister for the Environment, Science and Technology, the Republic of Ghana.

The purpose of the Conference was to:

(i) advance international dialogue on certification and labelling as a means of achieving sustainable forest management; and

(ii) contribute to the work of the United Nations Organisation's Commission on Sustainable Development's (CSD) IPF Program Element IV: Trade and environment relating to forest products and service.

The Conference considered a range of issues related to certification and labelling covering the following:

- the general principles of sustainable forest management;
- the general principles of certification and labelling;
- how certification and labelling may assist the achievement of sustainable forest management;
- social dimensions of certification and labelling;
- the economic aspects and trade implications of certification and labelling; and

- how certification and labelling might be implemented to effectively assist the achievement of sustainable forest management.

In formulating the Conference's program, Australia took into consideration the IPF's mandate of "taking account of the interests of all sectors and particularities of different countries and ensuring full transparency and participation of all interested parties" in examining "the issue of voluntary certification and labelling of forest products to contribute to a better understanding of the role of voluntary certification with regard to the sustainable management of forests, including the impact of certification on developing countries".

While the Conference organisers made considerable effort to have key stakeholder involvement, it was acknowledged during the proceedings that the program did not allow for the adequate presentation of the views of the organised labour movement. In recognition of this oversight, both international and domestic representatives of organised labour were provided with the opportunity in the final plenary session to present their views on sustainable forest management and certification and labelling.

The deliberations of the Conference took place against the background of the UNCED Statement of Forest Principles and Agenda 21 chapters relevant to forests.

2. INTRODUCTION

The keynote presentation by Dr Jag Maini identified the following issues which provided a focus for the Conference:

- the need to examine differential demands for certification and labelling from various stakeholders such as consumers, governments, the private sector and environmentalists;
- the willingness of consumers to pay more for certification and labelling;
- the role of economic instruments in promoting certification and labelling;
- the impact of added costs of certification and labelling on the profitability of the forests sector;
- the impact of certification and labelling on competitiveness;
- the need for consistent concepts and terminology;
- the contribution of certification and labelling to sustainable forest management;
- the level or scale at which certification is undertaken (for instance, management unit, national);
- the adequacy of environmental impact assessments for plantations;
- consideration of the relative merits of a single global system of certification and labelling and, as an alternative, several systems encompassing reciprocal recognition; and
- consideration of phased and flexible approaches to certification and labelling.

Of the issues identified for the Conference by Dr Maini's presentation, only three were not specifically addressed. These were:

- the role of economic instruments in promoting certification and labelling;
- the adequacy of environmental impact assessments for plantations; and
- the need for an international agency to monitor the implementation of certification and labelling at the global level.

3. CONFERENCE RESOLUTIONS

Based on its workshop discussions in which all experts were able to participate, and in response to this challenge, the Conference came to the following Resolutions and recommends their appropriate consideration by the IPF.

1. Sustainable forest management is the main goal shared by all participants.

2. Certification and labelling are potentially useful tools among many others to promote sustainable forest management.

3. The efficacy of certification and labelling for promoting sustainable forest management needs to be further evaluated.

4. Approaches to sustainable forest management, including certification and labelling, will depend on local, regional and national conditions, including forest type, land tenure and ownership patterns, systems of government, involvement of stakeholders including forest owners, community, indigenous people, business, labour, NGOs, and other interested parties.

5. Both performance standards and environmental management systems are complementary and important components for the assessment of sustainable forest management.

6. There is currently insufficient information to determine the extent of the market demand for certified products.

7. There are a number of issues that merit further consideration and questions that need to be further explored with respect to certification and labelling, including:

    - costs and benefits;
    - market implications;
    - the scientific basis for defining and measuring sustainable forest management;
    - governance and credibility of certification schemes;
    - the roles of governments and international institutions/organisations;
    - consistency with international agreements;

- harmonisation mutual recognition of/between schemes;
- the trade impacts of certification and labelling; and
- the role of environmental, economic and social objectives in achieving sustainable forest management.

Conference experts recorded their thanks to the Australian Government for organising and hosting the Conference, and to the Australian people for their hospitality.

4. CONFERENCE FORMAT

The Conference format consisted of plenary sessions and workshops.

Role of Plenary Sessions

Keynote addresses and panel presentations focused on key issues relating to certification and labelling. These provided background information and identified issues which were subsequently discussed in workshops. Plenary sessions also provided the opportunity to report on workshop outcomes.

The Conference program was extremely tight and time management was a major concern. In the plenary sessions, experts were therefore asked to provide written questions which were passed on to the relevant speakers for answer. Some experts were critical of this format. However the workshops allowed discussion and in-depth exchange of views and the final plenary session provided experts with the opportunity to ask questions and to provide comments from the floor. This strategy addressed the concerns of experts and was instrumental in enabling the Conference Resolutions to be openly discussed and agreed by experts.

Role of Workshops

A great deal of thought went into designing the workshops as forums for open and frank discussion of issues. The Conference organisers appointed a professional workshop facilitator who assisted in carefully designing the four workshops. The themes of the four workshops were:

- What constitutes sustainable forest management?
- What can certification and labelling contribute to sustainable forest management?
- Socio-economic dimensions of certification and labelling; and
- Consideration of draft outcomes.

At each workshop, participants split into "round table" groups of 10-15 and were provided with key questions pertinent to the workshop theme for which answers were required. The workshop groups provided the opportunity for differing views and concerns to be discussed, and in most cases, a consensus view was reached. Any differences of view were recorded. Participation in the different workshop groups was by self selection. However, experts were

successfully encouraged to ensure that, to the extent possible, the composition of the various groups closely reflected the range of interests represented at the Conference. The major questions for each of the three workshops were:

Workshop 1

- What are the key forest values requiring sustainable management?
- What are the key elements of sustainable forest management systems?
- What is the appropriate scale to measure sustainable forest management?
- What information is required to measure/monitor sustainable forest management?

Workshop 2

- What are the essential principles of certification and labelling if it is to contribute to sustainable forest management?
- What should be certified (products, management etc)?
- Will certification and labelling be effective in improving forest management practices and how does it compare with other domestic and international mechanisms?
- What are the principal lessons we can learn from experience in implementing certification and labelling?

Workshop 3

- What are the potential impacts of certification and labelling on communities that are reliant on forests, and how should they be dealt with?
- What are the implications of certification and labelling for developing countries?
- What are the trade implications of certification and labelling?
- How can certification and labelling sustain long-term economic benefits?

The Conference started with key stakeholders strongly defending their positions on certification and labelling. This caused some initial tensions among some key stakeholders. However, throughout the plenary sessions and the workshop discussions, experts presented their views with integrity and in a professional manner. The workshops enabled experts to understand and appreciate positions which differed from their own. As the Conference progressed, the tensions eased culminating in the unanimously adopted Resolutions set out in Section 3 above.

5. RECORD OF DISCUSSIONS

Experts agreed that certification and labelling are two separate activities, although they could complement each other.

Certification can be defined as a process of confirming or attesting to the sustainable management of the forest.

Labelling, on the other hand, is a market tool which confirms to consumers that the products are derived from sustainably managed forests.

Sustainably managed forests can be certified and products derived from those forests can subsequently be labelled.

Any reference to the term "certification and labelling" in this report should, therefore, be interpreted as "certification that the forest is being sustainably managed" and "labelling of products derived from certified sustainably managed forests".

5.1 Principles of Sustainable Forest Management

Experts agreed that sustainable management of the world's forests was the main goal shared by all participants. While sustainable forest management was the ultimate goal, it needs to be recognised that it was an evolving concept. Some experts claimed that it was impossible to define "sustainability" as it would depend, by and large, on the environmental, social and cultural objectives that society wishes to achieve through the use of forest resources. Some experts therefore suggested that certification of "well managed forests" could be a more practical and pragmatic objective to work towards.

Sustainable forest management needs to take account of the aspirations of countries, particularly developing countries, to relieve poverty through socio-economic development. Sustainable forest management should also provide for recognition of the rights of indigenous people and workers, including appropriate occupational health and safety standards.

Workshops reported that forests possess a range of economic, social and environmental values. These values would vary with time and space, reflecting the dynamic nature of forests and differences between the forest types and community needs and aspirations. Sustainable forest management involved the active consideration of all forest values which had been articulated in relevant international initiatives on criteria and indicators for assessing the sustainable management of the major forest ecosystems - temperate, boreal and tropical.

The achievement of sustainable forest management would depend on appropriate policies, management systems and performance measures at national, sub-national and local levels. Forest management objectives should be supported by effective legislation, technology, financial and labour resources and should recognise the biological complexity and intersectoral impacts on forests. Forest management should involve: resource assessment, stakeholder involvement, goal setting, planning, field management practices, monitoring and adaptation to improve performance.

Sustainable forest management was achievable and measurable at a number of scales. Specific attributes were important at differing ecologically and socio-economically relevant scales depending on how and why they were to be measured and applied. For instance, water yield and quality would be relevant at ecosystem (regional or catchment) and harvest unit (local) levels while sustainable employment would be relevant in the relief of poverty and the provision for education, training and health services at both regional and national levels.

5.2 Principles of Certification and Labelling

Certification and labelling were seen as "potentially useful tools among many others to promote sustainable forest management" (Resolution 2).

In recognition of the importance of sustainable forest management, the Conference devoted a considerable amount of time to discussing certification as one of the "potentially useful tools" for achieving this objective. The sovereign rights of countries to control their own land-use policies was also stressed.

Experts agreed that "the efficacy of certification and labelling for promoting sustainable forest management needs to be further evaluated" (Resolution 3).

Keynote speakers suggested that a certification scheme would need to satisfy the following requirements:

- be flexible, adaptable and practical to take account of differences in forest types (including planted forests), forest ownership, large and small operations, and the capacity of nations to support sustainable forest management. These differences could result in different forest management practices;
- ensure consistency in the setting of certification standards;
- be voluntary and participatory;
- ensure credibility and transparency;
- be affordable and enhance market access;
- be capable of continuous improvement;
- incorporate performance standards into environmental management systems;
- assist forest-dependent communities to encapture the full benefits of certification, particularly by recognising the rights of workers, indigenous people and communities; and
- be consistent with national policies and intergovernmental instruments.

Some areas of disagreement emerged. Some argued that certification is not necessary, as the regulatory framework in some countries should be adequate to protect forest values.

The need for independent third party involvement in verifying sustainable or well managed forests was raised. Some experts argued that foresters and forest managers were sufficiently competent to undertake auditing of performance. However, others indicated that to ensure credibility and transparency there was a need for independent third party involvement.

There was debate about whether occupational health and safety (OH&S) issues should be included as requirements for certification. Many believed that OH&S issues are fundamental in the definition of sustainability. Some experts argued that inclusion of OH&S would depend on whether certification covers more than ecologically sustainable management of forests. Other experts also held the view that most countries have processes such as

legislation that adequately deal with OH&S issues. Certification may be used as a lever to assist OH&S objectives where OH&S legislation does not exist or by reinforcing existing legislation.

5.3 Contribution of Certification to Sustainable Forest Management

The Conference in resolving that certification of forest management and labelling of forest products are "potentially useful tools among many others to promote sustainable forest management" (Resolution 2), identified "a number of issues that merit further consideration and questions that need to be further explored with respect to certification and labelling including:

- costs and benefits;
- market implications;
- the scientific basis for defining and measuring sustainable forest management;
- governance and credibility of certification schemes;
- the roles of governments and international institutions/organisations;
- consistency with international agreements;
- harmonisation/mutual recognition of/between schemes;
- the trade impacts of certification and labelling; and
- the role of environmental, economic and social objectives in achieving sustainable forest management" (Resolution 7).

Some experts suggested that the development and application of management processes which ensure the consistent achievement of sustainable forest management performance standards, could be more important than external certification.

5.4 Current Approaches and Lessons for the Future

Speakers reported on perspectives and experiences with certification and labelling to the Conference.

These experiences revealed that the credibility of certifiers and the methods used were critical to success. None of the current approaches to certification and labelling had attained universal acceptance.

Benefits reported from experiences included improved forest management, organisation of operations and access to markets.

Some certifiers are using a combination of performance standards and environmental management systems to certify forests. This approach is consistent with Conference Resolution 5, that is "both performance standards and environmental management systems are complementary and important components for the assessment of sustainable forest management". Certification schemes would need to incorporate both performance standards

and environmental management systems to ensure effective monitoring and on-going continuous improvement.

Dr Maini's keynote presentation raised the issue of whether there was the need for an international agency to monitor the implementation of certification and labelling at the global level.

While this issue was not specifically addressed, the potential for proliferation of certification schemes was recognised and the relative merits of a single global system of certification was considered.

Some experts expressed the view that competition among different schemes could be healthy, although proliferation of certification schemes could potentially cause confusion in the marketplace. Mutual recognition was raised as a possible mechanism to reduce confusion in the marketplace. It was suggested that mutual recognition could be signified by a common "Mark".

There was discussion on the need for local knowledge, respect for cultural differences and the sovereign rights of countries, clear communication with consumers and third party assessment in certification schemes.

5.5 Social Issues

Many of the Conference participants considered that the social impacts of certification on communities could be both positive and negative. However, some experts held the view that certification would have mainly negative impacts for developing countries. For forest-dependent communities, positive impacts could include:

- access to international markets;
- assurance of continued access to forests for traditional uses;
- improvement in the standard of living through increased financial benefits;
- stability of employment, education and training;
- participation in forest resource management decisions; and
- self-reliance, empowerment and enhancement of socio-political status.

It was recognised that many of these positive impacts could be achieved without certification, although certification could act as a catalyst and accelerate the achievement of these positive impacts.

Negative impacts of certification identified included the following:

- some communities may be tempted to over-exploit their forests for immediate financial gain because they anticipate higher production costs and reduced market access following widespread implementation of certification, particularly in countries where there was the absence of effective laws to prevent illegal forest harvesting. If

certification led to such over-exploitation, it would clearly not contribute to sustainable forest management;

- certification could result in "winners" and "losers" and cause conflict;
- there was the potential risk of communities incurring additional cost through certification without any guarantee of financial benefit through a higher premium for certified timber; and
- potential conflict with the principles of free trade.

It was suggested that over-exploitation of forests in anticipation of certification could be dealt with by:

- education and provision of accurate information; and
- legislation, regulation and codes of practice.

Experts identified that implementation of certification and labelling involves costs. Decisions on implementation should therefore involve a cost/benefit analysis, including consideration of the economic, social and environmental costs and benefits.

Organised labour, representing both domestic and international forest workers, argued that forest workers have a major interest in ensuring that global forest resources were managed sustainably. In addition to depending on forests for employment, forestry is a way of life for forest workers. The Conference heard that forests have many spiritual, cultural and other intrinsic values for forest workers, which they wished to pass on from one generation to the other.

Organised labour therefore suggested that certification and labelling schemes should ensure that local people and forest workers continued to receive long-term benefit from forestry operations that would enhance their quality of life.

The importance of the participation of local stakeholders in the setting of local standards was recognised by many. However, a concern was expressed that this had the potential to lead to the setting of different "hurdle heights" for different countries/communities. This problem should to be carefully considered so that market competition was not adversely affected.

The Conference noted that there were different pressures for certification in developed and developing countries, and in countries with high and low per capita forest cover.

5.6 Economic Issues

The main outcome from the keynote presentation and discussion of the economic aspects of certification was that there is currently insufficient information to determine the extent of the market demand for certified forest products. The extent of market demand for certified forest products should therefore be considered further. Currently there is no evidence which supports a consumer willingness to pay a price premium for labelled products.

In addition, there is insufficient information to determine whether certification can achieve its primary objectives of promoting sustainable management of forests and gaining market access. The economics of implementing certification, although still not clear today, may constitute one of the obstacles, especially to small-scale forest owners and millers.

The results of the key economic studies on market demand for certified forest products indicate that certification, and possibly labelling, could be successful in developing niche markets in countries where environmental awareness was relatively high. Little evidence was presented to support the suggestion that certification, with or without labelling, can have significant impact on the bulk of global trade in forest products.

While sustainable forest management would provide long-term economic benefits, it was felt that certification, with or without labelling and without other instruments, cannot contribute significantly to realising this benefit. However, short-term benefits might accrue to producers who can demonstrate sustainable forest management in the near future.

Some experts from developing countries were particularly concerned about possible negative impacts of certification on market access.

The possible lack of infrastructural capacity in developing countries to institute certification was identified as a major issue. The lack of human and financial resources in some developing countries to enable them to implement sustainable forest management could be a disadvantage.

The keynote presentation on the economic aspects of certification observed that the added costs of certification and labelling could raise the price of forest products, particularly wood products, and make them uncompetitive relative to high energy consuming substitutes such as steel, aluminium plastic and concrete. If this were to occur, it could reduce the profitability of the forest sector and favour demand for substitute products which might be less environmentally benign. Some experts argued that the costs reflect the currently uncosted social and environmental impacts of utilising forest resources.

In discussion, it was argued by some experts, including some from developing countries that, if demand for forest products was adversely affected, this could encourage some forest-dependent communities, particularly those in developing countries, to seek other land-use options for currently forested areas.

5.7 Trade Aspects of Certification and Labelling

Many participants were concerned that certification and labelling could be barriers to free trade. In this respect, any certification and labelling schemes would need to be consistent with the following principles of the Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade of the World Trade Organisation (WTO):

- non-discriminatory;
- transparent;
- not be an unnecessary obstacle to trade; and
- encourage harmonisation.

5.8 Implementation

There are possibly many different approaches to certification of sustainable forest management and the labelling of forest products. Governments could have a role to play in the development of appropriate systems. The role would vary depending on the specific country and its circumstances.

Governments' roles could include:

- facilitating the development of appropriate and adequate standards (including codes of practice) for sustainable forest management;
- enforcement of national laws and regulations;
- ensuring consistency of schemes with national goals and priorities;
- ensuring relevance and appropriateness of schemes to the circumstances of the country;
- ensuring that any system is impartial, scientifically developed, effectively monitored, voluntary and non-discriminatory; and
- ensuring consistency of actions with any relevant international commitments.

Without standardisation, different schemes which have only limited acceptance and therefore limited effectiveness could emerge. Governments and international organisations therefore have a major role to play in encouraging agreement, harmonisation and mutual recognition.

Consistency in concepts and terminology is also necessary to reduce confusion in the marketplace and should be considered as part of standardisation. It would therefore be necessary to address consistency in concepts and terminology as part of any effort to harmonise or standardise certification schemes.

Participants agreed that no single approach to certification and labelling would be appropriate for all situations. Flexibility would have to be a component of any scheme.

There were differences of opinion on the timing for the implementation of certification and labelling. In particular whether implementation should be by a phased and flexible approach. Producing countries were generally more supportive of time-staggered implementation. Whereas consumer and conservation perspectives suggested that market demands would determine the timing.

Some experts considered that "chain of custody" was not necessary for forest product labelling. Others argued that it is an essential component of credible product labelling. Some experts also argued that chain of custody for product labelling may not be cost effective and that real added value was in improving forest management.

The scale at which certification could be undertaken was also discussed. Certification of forest management could potentially be carried out at different scales or levels - forest management unit, forest owner, region, national or country. Some experts argued that certification was, by and large, about attesting to the quality of forest management or

practices, and therefore the forest management unit was the appropriate level or scale for implementation.

Others argued that certification at the forest management unit level could be too costly, particularly for small forest owners. However, opponents to certification at a larger scale, such as the national level, argued that certification at the national level may not be effective in contributing to achieving the goal of improving forest management.

Some experts preferred certification at the regional level, arguing that using the regional scale could overcome the disadvantages posed by certification at the forest management unit and the national levels.

There was a view that certification should apply to all forest types, including planted forests.

5.9 Non-wood products

The role of certification and labelling in assisting the sustainable management of forests, where non-wood products were involved, was also discussed.

Non-wood products identified as being important for trade, as well as for subsistence uses include:

- rubber;
- nuts and berries;
- medicinal plants;
- rattan;
- bamboo;
- maple syrup;
- palm heart; and
- mushrooms.

In addition, many rural communities depend on non-wood products for shelter, food and medicines. Non-wood products were important to the regional economies of many forest-dependent communities.

The Conference was informed that in some cases, the existence of non-wood products forces foresters to make compromises in terms of commercial timber harvesting in order to protect these non-wood resources.

While, in general, harvesting of non-wood products was expected to produce less severe environmental impacts to forest ecosystems than timber extraction, there had been instances where harvesting of non-wood products had resulted in local extinction of particular plant or animal species.

The sustainable management of non-wood products is determined by a number of factors including the:

- population dynamics of the species;
- frequency of its harvest;
- characteristics of the forest management system; and
- training and education of the harvesters.

Sustainable forest management involves the total forest ecosystem. Certification of forests could therefore play a useful role in promoting the sustainable management of non-wood products. Traditional knowledge and practices could be invaluable in assisting the sustainable management of non-wood products.

6. CONCLUSION

The Conference unanimously agreed that achievement of sustainable management of the world's forest resources was the "main aim shared by all participants". Certification of forest management and labelling of products derived from those forests were recognised as "potentially useful tools among many others" which can promote the achievement of this goal.

The unanimous Resolutions of the Conference are set out in Section 3 of this Report and the Conference recommended their appropriate consideration by the IPF.

For the convenience of readers of this document the Resolutions are repeated hereunder:

"1. Sustainable forest management is the main goal shared by all participants.

2. Certification and labelling are potentially useful tools among many others to promote sustainable forest management.

3. The efficacy of certification and labelling for promoting sustainable forest management needs to be further evaluated.

4. Approaches to sustainable forest management, including certification and labelling, will depend on local, regional and national conditions, including forest type, land tenure and ownership patterns, systems of government, involvement of stakeholders including forest owners, community, indigenous people, business, labour, NGOs, and other interested parties.

5. Both performance standards and environmental management systems are complementary and important components for the assessment of sustainable forest management.

6. There is currently insufficient information to determine the extent of the market demand for certified products.

7. There are a number of issues that merit further consideration and questions that need to be further explored with respect to certification and labelling, including:

- costs and benefits;
- market implications;
- the scientific basis for defining and measuring sustainable forest management;
- governance and credibility of certification schemes;
- the roles of Governments and international institutions/organisations;
- consistency with international agreements;
- harmonisation/mutual recognition of/between schemes;
- the trade impacts of certification and labelling; and
- the role of environmental, economic and social objectives in achieving sustainable forest management".

In the view of the Chairs, certification of forest management and labelling of products derived from those forest are complex issues which are unlikely to be resolved in the life of the IPF. The CSD may wish to give consideration to establishing an intergovernmental process to further examine these issues.

Denis Cullity
Chair

Dr Christina Amoako-Nuama
Co-Chair

July 1996